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# Findings from the National Working Positive Coalition Employment Needs Survey Connecticut Positive Futures Conference

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# National Working Positive Coalition (NWPC)

- Who we are:
    - Persons living with HIV/AIDS, service providers, educators and researchers in HIV/AIDS and employment
  
  - Mission
    - Promote research, development and implementation of effective practices in employment services
  
    - Coordinate sharing and dissemination of this information
  
    - Advocate for work options and opportunities for people living with HIV/AIDS.
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# Overview of this session

- Discuss development of the NWPC Vocational Development and Employment Needs Survey
  - Provide snapshot of initial findings relating to
    - Knowledge of VR services
    - Workplace disclosure
    - Impact of employment status on health and prevention
  - Discuss implications for vocational rehabilitation practice and research
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# Methods

- Survey research methods were used to identify the vocational development and employment needs of individuals with HIV/AIDS
  - Funded by NIDRR Switzer Fellowship
  - Instrument development
    - Revision of 2004 survey
    - Focus groups different regions of country
    - Review of literature
    - Expert panel and pilot testing
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# Theoretical Background

- Social Cognitive Career Theory
  - Career Barrier Research
  - Career Development Research
    - Ethnic minorities, Low SES, GLBT
  - HIV/AIDS Employment Research
  - Substance Abuse – Stages of Change
  - HIV/AIDS Health and Prevention
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# Survey Format

- 12 page survey
    - Paper and Internet formats (English & Spanish)
    - Data Collection June 2008 through October 2009
    - Major Sections of survey
      - Demographic information
      - Knowledge, use and satisfaction with VR services
      - Workplace issues (employed respondents)
      - Considering work issues (unemployed respondents)
      - Health status
  - Funded by NIDRR & NYS AIDS Institute
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# Recruitment

- Developed collaborative relationships with national HIV/AIDS organizations
    - Positive Women's Network
    - National Minority AIDS Council
    - TheBody.com
    - AIDS Alliance
  - Promoted survey at conferences
  - Eligibility
    - At least 18 years old and HIV+
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# Sample Demographics

	<u>National</u>	<u>CT</u>
■ Sample	2512	49
□ Mean Age:	46	47
□ Race/Ethnicity:		
■ Black	38%	44%
■ White	36%	36%
■ Latino	18%	16%
□ Sexual Orientation:		
■ Heterosexual	48%	62%
■ Gay	44%	27%
■ Bisexual		7%
		11%



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# Sample Demographics

	<u>National</u>	<u>CT</u>
❑ Earn \$15,000 per year or less	53%	57%
❑ High school/GED or less	38%	53%
❑ HIV Status:		
■ HIV	67%	78%
■ AIDS	33%	22%
❑ Employment Status:		
■ Employed	31%	38%
■ Not working	69%	62%
❑ Employed when Diagnosed	63%	61%

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# Knowledge of employment-related laws

	<u>National</u>	<u>CT</u>
■ Americans with Disabilities Act	47%	35%
□ NYS men 10% more informed		
■ Reasonable Accommodations	21%	14%
□ NYS men 5% more informed		
■ Family and Medical Leave Act	31%	26%
□ NYS men 5% more informed		
■ Workforce Investment Act	9%	9%
□ NYS men 3% more informed		

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# Knowledge of employment services/incentives

	<u>National</u>	<u>CT</u>
■ <b>Services</b>		
□ State Vocational Rehabilitation	29%	26%
□ One Stop Career Centers	17%	11%
■ <b>Work Incentives</b>		
□ Ticket to Work	22%	28%
□ Trial Work Period	20%	13%
□ Extended Medicare	10%	6%
■ <u>No knowledge of laws, services or incentives</u>	<b>28%</b>	<b>34%</b>

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# Use of VR Services

- 64% never used VR services
  - On a scale of 1 (not satisfied) to 6 (satisfied)
    - Relatively even distribution across scale
      - 1 = 19%
      - 2 = 12%
      - 3 = 18%
      - 4 = 17%
      - 5 = 17%
      - 6 = 17%
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# Employment Discrimination

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
■ <b>No employment discrimination</b>	44%	59%*
■ <b>Types of discrimination based on:</b>		
□ HIV	21%	17%*
□ Race	16%	12%*
□ Sexual Orientation	26%	3%*
□ Age	15%	10%*
□ Gender (female)	0%	13%*
□ Incarceration	10%	9%
□ Disability	9%	7%*
□ Ethnicity	7%	5%

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# Report Discrimination to....

- Of the those who experienced discrimination they reported it to:

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
□ Friends/Family	49%	47%
□ Employer	24%	13%*
□ Legal AID	13%	9%
□ EEOC	10%	8%

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# Results for Employed Participants

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
■ Employed (n= 804)	546	258
■ Work related to HIV/AIDS	34%	57%

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# Does employer know your HIV status?

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
■ <b>People working in an HIV Field</b>		
□ Employer knows HIV status	90%	95%
■ <b>People not working in an HIV Field</b>		
□ Employer knows HIV status	35%	26%

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# Use of Job Accommodations

- 16% Change in work schedule
  - 9% Allow time for medications
  - 6% Change in job duties
  - 5% Allow to be close to bathroom
  - 3% Reassign to another position
  
  - 42% None – I have not requested any.
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# Perceptions of work and health

	<u>HIV</u>	<u>Not HIV</u>
■ Being employed improved my outlook on the future	91%	76%
■ My health has interfered with my ability to work	27%	9%
■ Working negatively affected my health	11%	20%
■ Work interfered with my ability to take meds correctly	6%	12%

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# Impact of Employment on Health

*Since my current job, my... (if previously unemployed)...*

	Male	Female
■ Self-care increased	61%	39%
■ CD-4 count increased	66%	34%
■ Med Adherence increased	51%	49%
■ Alcohol use decreased	64%	36%
■ Drug use decreased	67%	33%
■ Unprotected sex decreased	65%	35%
■ # of sex partners decreased	66%	34%

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# Results for Unemployed Participants

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
■ Not working	1,092	593
■ Within these group there were varied perceptions of one's ability to work		
□ Able to work	43%	40%
□ Not sure if could work	32%	28%
□ Not able to work	25%	35%

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# Considering Work: Important Factors

- Increase income 87%
  - Feeling useful/productive 84%
  - Access to benefits [life insurance/retirement] 76%
  - Being around people 72%
  - My identity as a worker 64%
  - Being role model 64%
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# Positive Outcome Expectations

*If I go to work...* (Percent Agree)

	<b><u>Men</u></b>	<b><u>Women</u></b>
■ My outlook will improve	63%	61%
■ I'll be able to take meds correctly	49%	46%
■ My mental health will improve	50%	46%

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# Negative Outcome Expectations/Barriers

*If I go to work...* (Percent Agree)

	<b><u>Men</u></b>	<b><u>Women</u></b>
■ I will lose my disability income benefits	46%	42%
■ I will face discrimination	34%	30%
■ I will not have health insurance	32%	32%
■ Others will find out I have HIV	30%	24%
■ My housing will be at risk	26%	26%
■ I need help to develop my job skills	54%	56%
■ No employment services in my area	57%	64%

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# Summary

- HIV has had a dramatic impact on the employment and economic status of the respondents
  - Majority of the respondents reported perceived benefits associated with work.
  - Respondents had very limited knowledge of vocational services, organizations or other related resources.
    - Women had less awareness than men
  - About 25-30% of the sample were not able to work, which suggests that work is not a healthy option for all.
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# Summary

- Respondents face high levels of discrimination and the majority do not report discrimination
  - Employment is related to positive health and prevention outcomes for many
    - Need to attend to those where outcomes are not positive
  - Many report ability to work and a need to increase their income as primary factor in considering work
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# Summary

- Respondents report many barriers to employment and few supports to address these barriers
  - Unemployment is associated with positive health and prevention outcomes for many and negative outcomes for a substantial minority
    - Reflects episodic nature of HIV/AIDS for many
    - Suggests need for intervention at points of work transition
  - Many unemployed respondents anticipate that employment would lead to improved health and reduced risk factors associated with HIV prevention
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# Limitations and Future Research

- Initial descriptive findings
    - Need more sophisticated analysis to account for missing data and confounding influences
  
  - Volunteer sample
    - May not represent all of those with HIV/AIDS
  
  - More in-depth analysis will help to better understand factors that lead to different outcomes
    - Ongoing findings will be posted on NWPC webpage:  
[workingpositive.net](http://workingpositive.net)
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# Acknowledgements

- AIDS Institute of New York State
- National Institute of Disability & Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR)
- Maricela Carrera
- Paul Datti & PSU Research Team
- Eda Valero-Figueira
- Brendan Galivan
- Heather Homan
- Mark Misrok, President NWPC